

## **Broadbent Family Shopping Center**

### **By Carl Mellor**

On April 11, 1859, Joseph Broadbent and his wife Sarah set sail from England to America. They started their trek across the plains in June and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September. After resting a few days they came to Lehi and entered into activities of providing for themselves. They purchased a lot and built an adobe house on it. It is the same lot on which the Broadbent's Store got its start and is still situated.

A sewing machine was purchased, being one of the first in Lehi. Along with them machine they purchased bolts of blue denim cloth which were made into overall and jumpers by Sarah. Joseph put reinforcing copper rivets into them to secure longer wear. Grandfather Broadbent, being a watchmaker by trade in England would travel in the summer by horse and wagon throughout the territory and pick up watches and clocks to be repaired, bring them back and fix them during the winter and deliver the repaired items to the owners the next spring.

In 1882, by the suggestion of Grandmother Broadbent, they built a small store attached to their home. This is the year, Broadbent's were issued their first business license as a general store. This business proved to be very successful. Later years, additional buildings were added and finally the firm **Broadbent and Son** became one of the thriving mercantile institutions of the area. The active members of the business were Grandfather and Grandmother Broadbent and their son Joseph S. and their daughter Geneva.

Grandfather Broadbent passed away in 1920 and Joseph S. continued on with the business. As the business grew so did the building, room by room. Each room had its own characterization of merchandise, which would change with the needs of the times and still continues this way. Joseph S. and his children continued to work the general store. Upon his death in 1937, John Shaw Broadbent, his son, was made the keeper of the business. He and his wife Alice, and their three children, Nann, David, and Betty, continue to operate the family

store today.

As the business thrived through the years, diversified kinds of products and services were offered. Grocery items were added, and the first sack of sugar bough at the Lehi Sugar Factory was offered for sale at Broadbent's Store. A millinery shop was opened, making hats for every occasion. The feathery, frilly, lacy delights adorned most of the women and girls in the area.

Broadbents also opened a photography shop, which was located on the second floor of the store, which now, for years has been taken over by alicia and her doll fashions. Years ago there was a music department which sold pump organs, sheet music and fixings for instruments. Currently the store is stocked with beautiful hardwood furniture, a wonderful selection of the finest glassware, crystal and china, a full department of fabrics and notions, ready to wear clothing, books and many other things.

The business has seen good times and bad. It has survived through the war and depression our country has seen. Broadbent's general store has seen 131 years of change since it got it's first license in 1882. The store has grown, but one thing has remained constant. The early ideals of hard work and service and dedication to customers started by Joseph Broadbent has been continued to this day. They are in the people business. They live and appreciate their customers and their very dear friends. They hope their traditions will continue.